



FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF DISTRICT SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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SUPERINTENDENTS CALL UPON THE GOVERNOR FOR VETO

Tallahassee, FL – Florida superintendents stand united in calling upon Governor Rick Scott to veto HB 7069 and the Florida Education Funding Program (FEFP) in the General Appropriations Act. Superintendent's primary concern is the devastating impact this legislation will have on Florida's public schools.

"Florida superintendents cannot support HB 7069 or the budget due to the negative impact on public education," states FADSS President and Escambia County Superintendent Malcolm Thomas. "The budget fails to meet the basic funding needs of Florida's nearly 2.8 million public education students, and despite some good education policy in HB 7069 the overall damage to public education far outweighs the good," adds Thomas. "With a united voice, we call upon the Governor to veto HB 7069 and the FEFP in support of Florida public education," states Thomas.

The issues of greatest concern include:

Budget

The FEFP includes only a \$24.49 or .34% increase in per student funding or about \$69.14 million statewide, two factors negate that increase: the Base Student Allocation (BSA) and the proposed rate increase to the Florida Retirement System (FRS).

1. The cut to the BSA – which is the basic per student revenue that funds programs that serve Florida students – results in a negative \$27.07 or a -0.65% decrease. Due to the decrease to the BSA, many school districts will experience an overall cut in per student funding despite the modest FEFP increase.
2. The proposed rate increases for the FRS are projected to consume about \$54 million of the \$69 million projected by the FEFP increase, leaving roughly \$5.32 per student for districts to address all other increased costs of providing services to students.

Additionally school districts are facing increased health care, utility, fuel, and other operational costs. Yet when compared to the funding provided in the budget 10 years ago, the essential core of the operating budget remains below pre-recession levels, despite the fact that our state is experiencing a greatly improved economy.

HB 7069

- **Title I** – The Title I provision in HB 7069 threatens to put district-wide services at risk, particularly impacting students in poverty. Title I is a federal program that provides funds to school districts to serve economically disadvantaged students. The current proposal would limit the ability of school districts to provide district-wide services and would place undue restraints on a district’s ability to target specific services to support the needs of Florida’s most vulnerable students.

- **Capital Outlay** – HB 7069 changes the language regarding the sharing of the discretionary capital outlay millage, basically rendering it a requirement rather than a local decision. The 1.5 discretionary millage is the major non-voted source of revenue for school districts to pay for the maintenance and repair of schools, transportation and school bus purchases, and property casualty insurance. While some school districts already have local agreements to share a portion of their millage with charter schools, those decisions were made at the local level as they should be. This new requirement forcing school districts to automatically share the capital outlay millage with charter schools regardless of need and void of a locally-driven process, will severely impact a school district’s ability to meet the ongoing transportation and building and maintenance needs of Florida public schools.

- **Process**
K-12 education policy should not be buried in a \$419 million, 278-page piece of comprehensive legislation that is conceived through a process void of transparency and dropped on the last day of session. While HB 7069 includes some good K-12 policy that superintendents do support, the majority of “bad” K-12 education provisions embedded in HB 7069 – many of which did not go through the required vetting process – are clearly detrimental to Florida school districts.

The negative implications of HB 7069 and the FEFP will have very real consequences for Florida schools and the students they serve. A veto of both HB 7069 and the FEFP will minimize the negative impact on our schools and will enable school districts to better meet the educational needs of their students.

As Constitutional officers charged to oversee the education of Florida’s nearly 2.8 million public education students, Florida’s superintendents are committed to the ultimate goal of educational success for each and every student – and that starts with good K-12 education policy and sufficient funding to implement those policies in order to meet the education needs of Florida public school students.

To that end, Florida superintendents stand united in calling upon Governor Scott to veto HB 7069 and the FEFP in the General Appropriations Act in support of Florida public education.

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The mission of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents is to assist and support superintendents in providing leadership to ensure that every student in Florida acquires the skills, knowledge and attitude to be contributing members of our democratic society through leadership development programs focused on student achievement, building relationships with business and governmental leaders, and communication and networking services.

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